



PRESS RELEASE

# Governor Baker and Boston Mayor Walsh Announce Expanded Early College Program

Expansion of dual enrollment program between John D. O'Bryant Math and Science High School and Massachusetts Maritime Academy guarantees admission; financial aid.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Governor Charlie Baker | Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

Jim Peyser, Education Secretary

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**BOSTON** — Governor Charlie Baker and Mayor Martin J. Walsh today joined Massachusetts Maritime Academy and Boston Public School officials to announce the expansion of a dual enrollment program that will guarantee admission to the maritime college. College officials also pledged to fully-fund financial aid needs for qualified students from the John D. O'Bryant High School who are enrolled in the partnership program and admitted to the Academy.

The announcement comes as part of the Baker-Polito Administration's ongoing education series, as state officials are highlighting various education programs, initiatives and funding opportunities from early education to college level, all aimed at providing a quality and affordable education for every student in the Commonwealth.

"Exposing Massachusetts students to college-level courses while they are in high school will create more opportunities for them and improve their overall educational experience," **Governor Charlie Baker said.** "The expanded partnership between Mass Maritime and the John D. O'Bryant will strengthen both schools and all students involved and could serve as a model for similar programs across the Commonwealth."

“We are very pleased that Mass Maritime Academy and the City of Boston launched this innovative partnership to expose Boston Public School students to STEM college courses before they graduate from high school,” **Lt. Governor Karyn Polito said.** “Encouraging more students to pursue studying STEM subjects through programs like this will ultimately lead to an even stronger Commonwealth.”

“The City of Boston and Mass Maritime have a long, historic relationship that has grown even stronger with this partnership that brings more opportunities to our students,” **said Mayor Martin J. Walsh.** “We’re focused on providing Boston Public School students the education and resources that will lead to successful, rewarding careers, and I’m proud this partnership will allow graduates to bring their unique strengths to Mass Maritime.”

Mass Maritime Academy and the John D. O’Bryant High School first launched dual enrollment courses in the fall of 2015, aided by a \$30,000-a-year state dual enrollment grant. Academy faculty travel to the high school in Roxbury once a week to teach classes in coastal navigation, emergency management, and introduction to engineering. Students can earn up to 12 college credits, and receive mentoring and college counseling. They are also eligible for scholarships to attend the Academy’s summer academic camps, Sea, Science and Leadership.

Since the program’s inception, nearly 100 students have completed at least one dual enrollment course. School officials hope to greatly increase that number with the expanded partnership.

Mass Maritime was recently ranked #3 in the nation in a list of “best value” colleges – looking at tuition and fees versus the average starting salary, according to a recent ranking by SmartAsset.com Mass Maritime made the list for having an average starting salary for graduates of \$58,900 and in-state tuition costs at \$7,127.

“Successful dual enrollment and early college programs make college more accessible to low-income students by giving them opportunities to earn college credits while still in high school, at no cost to them, which could help ease the financial burden for them later,” **Education Secretary James Peyser said.** “Dual enrollment also exposes students to career pathways they may not have thought about before.”

“One of the most exciting aspects of this partnership is its potential to impact Boston students and their families. The college counseling, mentoring, experience with college-level courses in STEM subjects is extremely valuable, particularly for some first-generation college-goers,” **Massachusetts Maritime Academy Rear Admiral Francis McDonald said.** “We launched this program, with help from the state, because we wanted to impact students’ lives. By expanding this opportunity we hope to make an even bigger impact on more students.”

“I want to congratulate Admiral MacDonald and the staff of Mass Maritime for building this partnership with the John D. O’Bryant,” **Carlos E. Santiago, Commissioner of Higher Education, said.** “This is exactly

the kind of engagement that closes opportunity gaps and demonstrates that our public campuses are committed to their primary mission of serving the students of our state and providing employers with the high-skilled talent they need.”

“This is a great example of how a thoughtful partnership can benefit our students,” **said Boston Public Schools (BPS) Superintendent Tommy Chang.** “This partnership truly breaks down barriers to success by providing students hands-on career readiness skills for college credit, and eliminating a financial burden for families. We look forward to growing this partnership and are grateful for the support of the Massachusetts Maritime Academy.”

The Baker-Polito Administration has proposed increasing spending on all K-12 schools by more than \$318 million dollars since taking office in 2015. In March, Governor Baker announced a commitment to significantly increase the number of students in designated early college programs across the state over the next five to 10 years. Successful Early College programs make college more accessible to low-income students, and give them the opportunity to learn in college-level courses while at the same time earning college credits, at no cost, which helps ease financial burdens later. Earlier this year, after years of nominal increases for providers, Governor Baker proposed a 6% rate increase for early education providers, worth more than \$28 million dollars, and includes plans to increase annual support for infant and toddler providers by more than \$9 million. Massachusetts was recently ranked #1 in the country for education by U.S. News and World Report, and also tops the list for best performing states on Advanced Placement Exams.

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